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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
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STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE: SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES OR REGIONS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-ninth year

Letter dated 6 December 1994 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Guinea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter from Mr. Lansana Conté, President of the Republic of Guinea, addressed to Mr. Manzi Bakuramutsa of Rwanda, President of the Security Council for the month of December 1994, regarding the grave situation prevailing in Liberia and its implications in the subregion.

I would be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 37 (b), and of the Security Council.

(Signed) El Hadj Aboubacar DIONE
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

ANNEX

Letter dated 2 December 1994 from the President of Guinea addressed to the President of the Security Council

At a time when you are taking on a heavy responsibility both in the Security Council and at the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, I take real pleasure in writing to you regarding certain disturbing aspects of the current tragic situation in Liberia, and drawing your attention to the grave consequences of that situation for the West African subregion in general and for the Republic of Guinea in particular.

This conflict, which broke out in 1989, has led to the deaths of more than 150,000 people, massive population displacements within the country, the systematic destruction of existing infrastructures, and the disintegration of the structures of the Liberian State.

It has also led to the forced exile of several hundred thousand Liberians, who have sought asylum particularly in neighbouring countries.

Despite the numerous peace agreements concluded between the parties to the conflict, the most recent of which is the Akossombo agreement of 12 September 1994, and the commendable efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Organization of African Unity, and the United Nations are continuing to make to restore peace to Liberia, hostilities are continuing with ever greater intensity, causing more and more harm to the country. A disturbing increase is taking place in the number of armed factions, thus adding new dimensions every day to the prevailing anarchy and insecurity. This negative trend undeniably increases the risk of a conflagration throughout the West African region.

Naturally, as the Republic of Guinea is an immediate neighbour, and because of its socio-cultural and linguistic affinities, as well as its peoples' sense of hospitality, our country has borne the brunt of the economic, social and cultural consequences of this fratricidal war.

Accordingly, it is my responsibility to inform you that since 1990, the Republic of Guinea has constantly taken in successive waves of refugees, most of whom are young people and children, and whose number has reached the huge figure of 750,000.

Since the fighting intensified in September 1994, Guinea has been receiving at least 1,000 refugees each day.

Their presence unquestionably exerts huge pressure on Guinea's resources, despite the support provided by international agencies and non-governmental organizations.

As a result, my country faces serious problems, including a rising crime rate which threatens the stability and sovereignty of the State, environmental

degradation, deterioration of the health situation and anarchic occupation of school buildings for housing purposes.

Thus, for example, as a result of the lack of toilet facilities, what doctors here call the "fecal peril" has caused the death of tens of thousands of people; moreover, this is a low estimate because of the absence of statistical services in rural areas.

For its part, the education sector has suffered unprecedented damage which has driven 15,000 young people from primary and secondary education onto the streets.

A further and no less harmful consequence of the civil war is apparent in the disturbances which have beset our sister republic, Sierra Leone, since March 1991, giving rise to a permanent climate of insecurity there, the negative impact of which on the situation in Guinea is also apparent.

For this reason, in the face of this enduring war which has bled the Liberian people, my wish is for the Security Council to become more vigorously involved in the peace process in Liberia.

In this connection, I place my hope in the firmness which the United Nations will show towards Member States to ensure that its relevant resolutions and those of OAU and ECOWAS, in particular those concerning the embargo on the supply of arms to the warring parties, are enforced.

At this crucial phase of the crisis it is appropriate for the United Nations to maintain and strengthen its presence in Liberia by providing the Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) of ECOWAS and the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia with appropriate means to permit them to discharge their mission effectively.

In addition, greater international assistance should be provided to the refugees and host countries to lighten the burden resulting from this situation.

For its part, the Republic of Guinea remains, as in the past, fully at your disposal to seek a lasting peace, not only in Liberia, but everywhere else in the world.

(Signed) Lansana CONTÉ
President of the Republic of Guinea